



FROM PAPERWORK TO POSSIBILITY: HOW A CLASSROOM CHALLENGE INSPIRED ME TO CREATE A DIGITAL SOLUTION

SHERILL MAE A. FLORES

Special Education Teacher

Chicago Public Schools

Chicago, Illinois, USA

A Teacher's Heart: Advocacy for All Learners

My Journey as a Special Education Teacher

I am Sherill Mae A. Flores, a Filipino special education teacher with more than a decade of experience supporting students with special needs. For 10 years, I taught at Tomas Sagun Integrated School in Pagadian City, Philippines. I later continued my teaching journey in the United States, where I currently work as a Special Education Teacher at Orville T. Bright Elementary School in Chicago.

Teaching students with special needs in both the Philippines and the United States has given me many opportunities to learn, grow, and face different classroom challenges. These experiences have inspired me to look for practical and accessible ways to support not only my students, but also the educators who work with them every day.

One of those challenges was behavior documentation.

Editorial Team

Editor-in-Chief: Alvin B. Punongbayan

Associate Editor: Andro M. Bautista

Managing Editor: Raymart O. Basco

Web Editor: Nikko C. Panotes

Manuscript Editors / Reviewers:

Chin Wen Cong, Christopher DC. Francisco, Camille P. Alicaway, Pinky Jane A. Perez,
Mary Jane B. Custodio, Irene H. Andino, Mark-Jhon R. Prestoza, Ma. Rhoda E. Panganiban, Rjay C. Calaguas,
Mario A. Cudiamat, Jesson L. Hero, Albert Bulawat, Cris T. Zita, Allan M. Manaloto, Jerico N. Mendoza



Understanding the Challenge

Being a special education teacher is not easy. There are many things we need to consider, especially when supporting students with behavioral needs. We need to observe behaviors, recognize patterns, and try to understand why a behavior may be happening so that we can provide appropriate support.

Documentation is an important part of this process. Teachers and support staff need to record what they observe so that information can be reviewed and used to better understand a student's needs.

In my experience, this became especially challenging when using paper behavior forms. Paper records can take up storage space, become misplaced or damaged, and require additional paper and ink. Accessing information can also be difficult because the records are available only where the physical copies are stored.

Preparing paper documentation for digital recordkeeping can create additional work as well. Forms may need to be scanned, organized, and arranged for individual students. As a teacher already balancing instruction, student support, classroom management, and documentation, I began to wonder:

"Is there an easier and more organized way to do this?"

Editorial Team

Editor-in-Chief: Alvin B. Punongbayan

Associate Editor: Andro M. Bautista

Managing Editor: Raymart O. Basco

Web Editor: Nikko C. Panotes

Manuscript Editors / Reviewers:

Chin Wen Cong, Christopher DC. Francisco, Camille P. Alicaway, Pinky Jane A. Perez,
Mary Jane B. Custodio, Irene H. Andino, Mark-Jhon R. Prestoza, Ma. Rhoda E. Panganiban, Rjay C. Calaguas,
Mario A. Cudiamat, Jesson L. Hero, Albert Bulawat, Cris T. Zita, Allan M. Manaloto, Jerico N. Mendoza



From Paper to Digital

That simple question inspired me to create my Digital ABC Behavior Form using Google Forms.

I was not trying to create something complicated. I wanted a practical tool that could make behavior documentation easier to organize and access when needed. I also wanted a system that would reduce my dependence on paper and make digital recordkeeping more manageable.

The idea came directly from a problem I experienced as a classroom teacher.

My goal was simple: I wanted to make teachers' work a little easier.

Behavior documentation is important, but I did not want the process itself to become an additional burden for teachers and support staff who are already managing many responsibilities throughout the school day.

Through this experience, I learned that educational technology does not always have to be complicated or expensive. Sometimes, we can take a tool that is already available to us and adapt it to address a practical classroom need.

Editorial Team

Editor-in-Chief: Alvin B. Punongbayan

Associate Editor: Andro M. Bautista

Managing Editor: Raymart O. Basco

Web Editor: Nikko C. Panotes

Manuscript Editors / Reviewers:

Chin Wen Cong, Christopher DC. Francisco, Camille P. Alicaway, Pinky Jane A. Perez,
Mary Jane B. Custodio, Irene H. Andino, Mark-Jhon R. Prestoza, Ma. Rhoda E. Panganiban, Rjay C. Calaguas,
Mario A. Cudiamat, Jesson L. Hero, Albert Bulawat, Cris T. Zita, Allan M. Manaloto, Jerico N. Mendoza



From My Classroom to Other Educators

As I continued using and sharing my Digital ABC Behavior Form, I realized that the challenge I experienced was not mine alone.

I had the opportunity to present the resource during Chicago Public Schools (CPS) Googlepalooza 2026. Educators who attended my presentation expressed interest in the idea, asked for access to the form, and shared positive feedback. One educator even described it as a “game changer.”

Hearing that feedback was meaningful to me. It made me realize that something I created in response to a challenge in my own classroom might also be useful to educators experiencing similar difficulties.

This encouraged me to continue sharing the idea. I later shared the resource with the Council for Exceptional Children (CEC) All-Member Forum, hoping to connect with other special education professionals who work directly with students and are also responsible for observing and documenting behavior.

Editorial Team

Editor-in-Chief: Alvin B. Punongbayan

Associate Editor: Andro M. Bautista

Managing Editor: Raymart O. Basco

Web Editor: Nikko C. Panotes

Manuscript Editors / Reviewers:

Chin Wen Cong, Christopher DC. Francisco, Camille P. Alicaway, Pinky Jane A. Perez,
Mary Jane B. Custodio, Irene H. Andino, Mark-Jhon R. Prestoza, Ma. Rhoda E. Panganiban, Rjay C. Calaguas,
Mario A. Cudiamat, Jesson L. Hero, Albert Bulawat, Cris T. Zita, Allan M. Manaloto, Jerico N. Mendoza



Sharing With Fellow Filipino Educators

Now, through InstaBright e-Gazette, I am grateful for another opportunity to share my experience, particularly with fellow educators in the Philippines.

This is especially meaningful to me because my journey as a special education teacher began in the Philippines. For 10 years, I experienced firsthand the dedication, creativity, and resourcefulness required of teachers while supporting students with different needs.

Although classrooms, schools, and available resources may differ, teachers often share a common goal: to find better ways to support our students.

I hope my experience encourages other teachers to look at the challenges they encounter in their own classrooms and ask, "What can I do to make this better?"

The answer does not always have to be a sophisticated program or an expensive technology. Sometimes, it may begin with a simple idea, an available tool, and a teacher who is willing to try something different.

Editorial Team

Editor-in-Chief: Alvin B. Punongbayan

Associate Editor: Andro M. Bautista

Managing Editor: Raymart O. Basco

Web Editor: Nikko C. Panotes

Manuscript Editors / Reviewers:

Chin Wen Cong, Christopher DC. Francisco, Camille P. Alicaway, Pinky Jane A. Perez,
Mary Jane B. Custodio, Irene H. Andino, Mark-Jhon R. Prestoza, Ma. Rhoda E. Panganiban, Rjay C. Calaguas,
Mario A. Cudiamat, Jesson L. Hero, Albert Bulawat, Cris T. Zita, Allan M. Manaloto, Jerico N. Mendoza



Teachers as Problem-Solvers

Creating the Digital ABC Behavior Form changed the way I think about classroom challenges.

Teachers are not only responsible for implementing strategies and resources created by others. Because we work directly with students every day, we are also in a unique position to recognize problems and think of practical ways to address them.

A classroom solution may begin with only one teacher and one need. But when we share our experiences with others, that small idea may inspire another educator to create or adapt a solution for their own students.

At the same time, digital tools should always be used responsibly. Any tool involving student information should follow applicable school and district requirements for confidentiality, privacy, and appropriate access. A digital behavior documentation tool is also not a replacement for professional judgment or formal behavioral assessment when those are needed.

Editorial Team

Editor-in-Chief: Alvin B. Punongbayan

Associate Editor: Andro M. Bautista

Managing Editor: Raymart O. Basco

Web Editor: Nikko C. Panotes

Manuscript Editors / Reviewers:

Chin Wen Cong, Christopher DC. Francisco, Camille P. Alicaway, Pinky Jane A. Perez,
Mary Jane B. Custodio, Irene H. Andino, Mark-Jhon R. Prestoza, Ma. Rhoda E. Panganiban, Rjay C. Calaguas,
Mario A. Cudiamat, Jesson L. Hero, Albert Bulawat, Cris T. Zita, Allan M. Manaloto, Jerico N. Mendoza



From a Small Idea to a Bigger Purpose

What started as a problem with paper documentation became something more meaningful to me.

It became an opportunity to identify a problem, create a practical solution, share what I learned, listen to other educators, and continue improving my practice.

My journey from the Philippines to the United States has taught me that while educational systems may be different, the heart of teaching remains the same. We want to understand our students. We want to help them succeed. And when we encounter challenges, we continue looking for better ways to serve them.

My Digital ABC Behavior Form began with a simple classroom need. Today, I am grateful to have the opportunity to share the story behind it with other educators.

I hope my experience reminds fellow teachers that meaningful ideas can begin in an ordinary classroom.

Sometimes, change begins when a teacher sees a problem and simply asks, "How can I make this better?"

Editorial Team

Editor-in-Chief: Alvin B. Punongbayan

Associate Editor: Andro M. Bautista

Managing Editor: Raymart O. Basco

Web Editor: Nikko C. Panotes

Manuscript Editors / Reviewers:

Chin Wen Cong, Christopher DC. Francisco, Camille P. Alicaway, Pinky Jane A. Perez,
Mary Jane B. Custodio, Irene H. Andino, Mark-Jhon R. Prestoza, Ma. Rhoda E. Panganiban, Rjay C. Calaguas,
Mario A. Cudiamat, Jesson L. Hero, Albert Bulawat, Cris T. Zita, Allan M. Manaloto, Jerico N. Mendoza

INSTABRIGHT e-GAZETTE

ISSN: 2704-3010

Volume VIII, Issue I

August 2026

Available online at <https://www.instabrightgazette.com>



About the Author

Sherill Mae A. Flores is a Filipino special education teacher with more than a decade of experience supporting students with special needs. She taught for 10 years at Tomas Sagun Integrated School in Pagadian City, Philippines, before continuing her teaching career in the United States. She currently works as a Special Education Teacher at Orville T. Bright Elementary School in Chicago Public Schools. Her professional interests include accessible educational technology, behavior documentation, data-informed classroom practices, and practical teacher-created resources for students with significant support needs.

Through her professional website, ***A Teacher's Heart: Advocacy for All Learners***, she shares educational resources and classroom-based ideas with fellow educators.

Editorial Team

Editor-in-Chief: Alvin B. Punongbayan

Associate Editor: Andro M. Bautista

Managing Editor: Raymart O. Basco

Web Editor: Nikko C. Panotes

Manuscript Editors / Reviewers:

Chin Wen Cong, Christopher DC. Francisco, Camille P. Alicaway, Pinky Jane A. Perez,
Mary Jane B. Custodio, Irene H. Andino, Mark-Jhon R. Prestoza, Ma. Rhoda E. Panganiban, Rjay C. Calaguas,
Mario A. Cudiamat, Jesson L. Hero, Albert Bulawat, Cris T. Zita, Allan M. Manaloto, Jerico N. Mendoza
